

/101 cont. /

[36] There were two settlements of "docile" Bakaïf: the
 [101] aldeamento on the Rio Novo, as this first was called, after a tribu-
 tary of the Arinos, and the aldeamento on the Paranatinga. The
 two villages are not yet old, all the adults were born farther up
 the Paranatinga, on the "Salto" /waterfall; see the glossary.

[131] p. 172 /; the Bakaïf, however, were probably spread over this
 entire region in small hordes, as is shown by the fact that they
 were noted as far as the Rio das Mortes. In the 'twenties, when
 [179] the gold-seeker expedition under the leadership of P. Lopez
 [648] pushed into this region, they were converted to Christianity, on
 [199] which occasion, as Reginaldo related, his grandfather and many
 others lost their lives.

823. /102/ We eagerly inquired as to whether he knew about a
 river beyond the Paranatinga? Today, he replied, this region is
 [131] completely strange to them, he remembered from his youth,
 [101] however, that one was supposed to come to a large river if one
 went from the Paranatinga toward the rising sun, and on this river
 there were said to be Bakaïf still living, the "antiguos" /the
 ancients/, who were not Christians.

361 The two aldeamentos are under the administration of the
 [648] "Director dos Índios" in Cuyabá /Cuiabá/. Reginaldo is a
 [622] Brazilian captain, his successor as chief of the tribe, Joaquim,
 361 is a lieutenant. Our seeing no women was due to the fact that
 they were living in an aldeamento two legoas away; the huts
 which we occupied were used only when the farm work required
 it or when there were visitors. Reginaldo /illustration appears
 here/ completely forgot to say how sorry he was that he could
 greet us only as a grass widower.

[162] The village numbered six huts; the population amounted
 342 to 55: 16 men, 19 women, 20 children. The soldiers were usu-
 ally quartered in the big house that Reginaldo otherwise occupied
 with a few others: a rectangle 57 paces long and five paces wide,
 which was divided into a number of separate rooms by means of
 partitions. We occupied the guest house -- it was only 17 paces
 [199] long. It was modern construction, learned from the colonists.
 Twenty minutes away we found two deserted old-style huts.

Y /267 cont./

535 back and forth in this way for hours. They held bow and arrow in their hands and were led by a masked figure which, in the semidarkness, looked like a man dressed as a woman at a carnival.

Y The clothing was feminine, the abrupt movements masculine.

[292] This costume consisted of a cotton cap with red, yellow, and green feather trimming all around and a long white cloak of loosely knotted cotton cord that terminated at the bottom with a wreath of black mutum feathers pointing downward. -- Castro said that he had interpreted the explanation of an Yuruna to mean that this festival dance preserves the memory of former times when a great chief was received with much pomp in the villages that he visited. That chief is represented by the man in the cloak and the feather crown. /The remainder of Ch. 16 and Ch. 17, pp. 267-281, are omitted in the translation./

/282/

Eighteenth Chapter

Legends of the Bakaïri

B

273

[15]

The name that plays the chief role in the story of jolly Captain Caetano Mêmo, which unfortunately was told in such miserably broken Portuguese, is that of the "Imperador." If the missionaries had the intention of causing the greatest possible confusion of concepts in the heads of the Bakaïri whom they were to convert, they achieved their purpose to such an extent that one can only with effort separate a little clarity and concreteness from the general confusion. Let us imagine: Imperador the sun-god of the Indians. He bears two other names. Keri and Schischi. His brother is called Kame and also Nuna. Schischi, however, is the sun, Nuna the moon. Keri and Kame are merely two other names for the two celestial bodies, which are found among many "Guck tribes" (cf. chart of the Nu /untranslated/) interestingly enough in reverse, Keri belonging to the moon, Kamu to the sun.

B

539

[46]

/283 cont./

*191 its course with the furrow of the spine as well as where it ends with a
524 somewhat deeply cut division, is free of all schematization. The
532 head reminds one of that of an Eskimo in its round hood, which is
the result, first of all, of the absence of a neck, and then of the
shallow depression dug out below the hair line for the face and in
which the nose was left standing. In the case of the loam man of
the Bakairi, it can be seen on closer inspection that there was
also a depression (but extremely shallow) for the face.

*171 Wax figures. Again, as in the
239 case of maize, merely an artistic
532 way of preserving the material.

125 The black wax was shaped into
pretty little animal figures,
and, to be sure, most attrac-
tively among the Mehinakú,
and thus hung up or placed in a
basket until needed. Among the Bakairi we found a human figure
better modeled than the loam dolls. The civilized Indians con-
verted to Christianity have modified their saints out of wax and sell



Fig. 72. Wax figure:
peccary. Mehinakú. (1/2
nat. size /as shown in the
original illustration). /

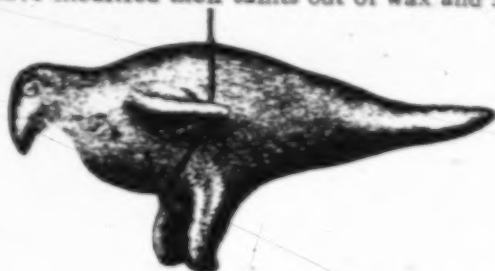


Fig. 73. Wax figure: karijo dove.
Mehinakú. (1/2 nat. size /as shown
in the original illustration/.)

them. The plastic wax best revealed what the artists could do. Some animals were very well modeled, for instance, the small peccary or tayassu, 6.5 centimeters long, of Figure 72, Dicotyles torquatus. The eyes are represented by a pair of small plates of shell, the nostrils of the proboscis put in deeply. Of other mammals we also saw the large swamp deer and a howling monkey in the form of wax figures. More common were the hanging

/298 cont. /

*171 finally, that there was not the slightest trace of any secrets and
535 mysteries or of any special relationship of the medicinemen to
562 the dances which were supposed to be kept secret from the women.

*171 It is also for protection against feminine curiosity that the
345 entrances of the flute houses on the Kulisehu are made so low
562 that one can enter only in a very stooped position or even must
slide in on the knees. I do not know to what extent the prohibi-
tion for the women is carried out in practice in everyday life,
but we did not obtain permission to measure them in the flute
house, and certainly it was said "the women would be killed if
they went into the flute house" -- a rather crude variant of "
mulier taceat in ecclesia" /the woman is to be silent in church/.

•[199] That the custom was still taken seriously among the docile
Bakaïrî some 30 or 40 years ago is best illustrated by an experi-
ence which, according to the story of an old Brazilian, the priests
who brought Christianity were obliged to undergo. They found
nothing more natural than to assemble the new congregation in
the flute house which was so well suited for church purposes be-
cause it was uninhabited. /299/ The men came willingly enough,
but the women remained outside and were persuaded only with
great difficulty to risk physical danger for the sake of the salva-
tion of their souls.

*171 Among all the tribes the body is partially or completely
535 covered with aprons or cloaks for the masked dances. Leaf strips
of buriti straw or dry grass blades about a meter long were strung
on a cord to make a wide apron and were wound around the neck
several times so that they hung down from the shoulders, or
around the /Fig. 90 appears here/ hips so that they reached to
the ankles, or combined in both forms. The chief difference
[825] is in the ornament for the head. Common to all is the connection
with animals. Here we may distinguish.

1. Imitations of animals are put on. Bakaïrî.
2. Straw caps with long fiber hangings, in part bearing
attributes of the animal. Bakaïrî.
3. Fish net in front of the face. Nahuquá.
4. Straw lattice in the fashion of the sieve-filter, in an oval
hoop. Without facial parts. Bakaïrî, Nahuquá. Facial parts of
wax. Auetó.

/334 cont./

* [17] One of the women in the Paranatinga village was called makáia -
 [51] tujú stork. The names of the men were usually obtained with-
 [124] out difficulty; sometimes there was a little reluctance and it
 was preferred that a friend give the information. One Bakaúf
 allegedly had no name because his parents had died early. From
 the women on the Kulisehu I always received only the answer,
 "I am a woman"; however, I neglected to ask a third person.
 I have described the custom of exchanging names; cf. pages 115
 and 122. It explains why the Indians make so little fuss about
 submitting to Christian baptism. To them it means simply a
 ceremony by means of which they lose their old name.

* [17] Birth and couvade. Abortions are said to take place fre-
 [84] quently. The women are afraid of childbirth. Among the
 [84] Bakaúf they make a tea from the root of a campo tree called
 [122] perovina. Probably there are also mechanical procedures. The
 woman gives birth in a kneeling position on the floor, hanging on
 to a post. The hammock is not supposed to be soiled. Women
 who demonstrated this to us in pantomime and who knew about it
 from experience stated emphatically that the pains were great.
 They soon get up, however, and go to work, and the man goes
 through the well-known couvade, the male lying-in, during
 which he adheres to a strict diet, does not touch weapons, and
 spends most of his time in the hammock. On our return we saw
 such a couvade in Maigéri in Paleko's house. An actual lying-in
 room had been /335/ set up by stretching two man-high walls
 of hanging buriti leaves from one of the main posts to the outer
 wall. In this way a three-cornered segment was closed off. I
 was gladly allowed to enter so that I could give the child beads.
 Inside there were stretched four hammocks, sheltering two women
 with babies and two men. A strong odor of pikf, coming from
 rubbings, filled the room. The babies were kurápa, ill, weak,
 [155] the parents complained. The fathers and mothers were ceaselessly
 occupied with blowing on them, and, to be sure, with hollow-
 sounding noises with the mouth nearly closed, which was hardly
 interrupted for a moment throughout the following night. The
 [514] husbands left the house only to relieve themselves; they lived
 [262] exclusively on thin pogu, mandioca cakes crumbled in water.

/387 cont./

131 Bakaïrî are all inhabitants of the eastern source-region of the
133 Tapajoz and are to be found only in the region of the plateau
above the rapids and waterfalls that put great obstacles in the
way of the journey downstream to the Amazonas /Amazon/.

175 The West Bakaïrî have been known since the first raiding
101 expeditions of the "Paulistas," the discoverers of the Mato Grosso
who boldly pushed forward from the province of S. Paulo on their
slave hunts at the beginning of the previous century. Even Antonio
Pires de Campos, from whom we have a report* from the year 1723,

[113]

* Revista Trimensal do Instituto Historico
XXV, p. 448. Rio de Janeiro, 1862.

"after the experience of so many years," had heard of them; after
he has briefly characterized (page 448) the tribes -- today long
since disappeared -- of the upper Cuyabá and the Rio Manso
emptying into it, he continues: "All these have the same way of
life, the same type of weapons, and everything else the same,
they are nomadic tribes and, with their raiding expeditions, succeed
in causing harm to the heathen people named Bacayris, who live
on the tributaries of the Maranhão (sic!); and from there on vari-
ous stations of heathens /388/ with countless villages follow one
another, as I have been informed, and all very warlike people
and masters of their weapons."

The Bakaïrî are also mentioned in a report from the year
1749 about a trip from Pará into the source region of the Madeira,
and furthermore it may also have happened in many an old note
about the origin of the Mato Grosso gold mines. It is always only
a casual mention of the tribal name, which does not offer us
further information. At most we may conclude from these cita-
tions that in the previous century the Bakaïrî must have been more
numerous and perhaps had advanced somewhat more to the west
and southwest than is the case today. This will come out more
clearly, however, from their own tradition.

175
● 797 Closer contact with the Brazilians did not take place until
the beginning of the 'twenties in our century. At that time

/388 cont./

- 195 "Padre" Lopes reached as far as the region of the Paranatinga
 • 797 and converted the West Bakaïrî to Christianity. Lopes was an
 adventurous gold-seeker, about whom the painter of the
 Langsdorff Expedition* of 1828 remarks that, accompanied by

[113]

* Hercules Florence; cf. Revista Trimensal,
 Vol. 38, II, p. 280.

- 195 Apiakâ /Apiaca/ Indians, he had gone up the Rio dos Peixes, a
 tributary of the Arinos, and "fought with many savages." At
 any rate, since his visit, which cost the lives of Reginaldo's
 grandfather and others, the West Bakaïrî have been regarded as
 Christians. How superfluous the brutalities of the noble Lopes
 were comes out best from the following words of the geographer
 [113] Ayras de Cazal in his Corographia Brasilica /Chorography of
 Brazil/ of the year 1817, therefore before Lopes: "The Baccahirys
 who inhabit the regions adjacent to the Rio das Mortes carry on
 ceaseless warfare against all types of quadrupeds and birds. To
 this day these people have not engaged in any hostilities against
 the Christians. It is said that they are white and friendly: one
 reason why they are regarded as a horde of the Paricys."

[101]

The real reason why the Bakaïrî could have been regarded
 as a horde of the Paressî, as happened in the case of Martius, is
 simply that there was no accurate information about either one
 of the neighboring tribes. If the natives occasionally came to
 [177] Cuyabá in small numbers in order to beg for a few gifts of
 ironware, shirts, trousers, or blankets from the government, they
 were felt to be annoying guests whom one tried to get rid of as
 quickly as possible, and about whose language or peculiarities no
 official needed to bother. They did not live, say, near an
 avenue of communication connecting two important towns, but
 rather, on the contrary, sat behind the very last little colonists,
 who themselves received very little attention, there where there
 were no avenues at all; they did not do these neighbors any harm
 and were therefore of no interest whatever to the government.

- 197 The good Chief Felipe in the Paranatinga village racked his brains

THE BACAIRI

[p. 69-B]

000
101 Brazilian Government. The information presented here was obtained at Simão Lopes from the Bacairi who lived on the Rio Kuliseu and relates to the life that they lived there about 40 years ago.

[192] Linguistically the Bacairi belong to the Carib-speaking family and appear to be closely related culturally to the other Carib-speaking tribes in the Upper Xingú Basin. The Bacairi are short in stature, broad-shouldered and well-built. The head is broad, the nose straight or aquiline, the face narrow, the lips fairly thin. In physical appearance the Bacairi remind one of the Arawak-speaking Pareesi, but contrast sharply with the large-framed, coarse-featured Bororo, Umutina, and Guató living in the headwaters of the Paraguary River to the south.

175 The Bacairi Indians are first mentioned by
131 Gonçalves da Fonseca in his account of his travels to the Madeira region in 1749. In the atlas of Thomas Jeffry, 1776, the "Bacahyris" are located on the Rio Paranatinga. Ayres de Casal, in 1817, refers to the "Baccahyris" as living in the region around the Rio das Mortes. Martins places them
175 in the headwaters of the Xingú. From 1820 on,
177 more or less permanent contact has been maintained with the Bacairi living on the Rio Novo and Rio Paranatinga. In 1820 a P. Lopez led an expedition in search for gold into the area and
[292] with him came priests who began to convert the Bacairi to Christianity. With these contacts came disease and conflicts (Von den Steinen, 1942, p. 123).

175 The first scientific account of the Bacairi dates
101 from the voyage of Von den Steinen down the
131 Xingú River in 1884. Traveling over land from
361 Cuiabá, he and his party reached the Christianized Bacairi living in the villages of Rio Novo and Paranatinga with whose help he continued his voyage down the Batoví River where he was the first to make contact with the four pagan villages of the Bacairi located between latitudes 13°30' and 12°30' S.

175 The following table gives size and number of
162 inhabitants of the villages visited by Von den Steinen (1942, appendix, table 8, p. 418):